

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3669

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 3384

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, RO

SUBJECT: DISASTER RELIEF - ROMANIAN FLOOD

REF: (A) STATE 169406, (B) BUCH 3201 (C) BUCH 3308

1. SUMMARY: DISCUSSIONS WITH ROMANIAN OFFICIALS TO DATE, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR'S TALK WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER ION PATAN JULY 18, INDICATE DEFINITE ROMANIAN INTEREST IN EXISTING (AND POSSIBLY ADDITIONAL) CCC CREDITS FOR COTTON. ALSO INTEREST IN SEEDS. FOR PRESENT, GOR DOES NOT RPT NOT ANTICIPATE NEED FOR WHEAT IMPORTS. END SUMMARY.

2. REF A VERY HELPFUL IN OUTLINING DEPT THINKING. WE MADE USE OF EARLIER SCHEDULED MEETING WITH PATAN TO FOCUS ON ASPECTS RAISED THEREIN. WH HAVE MADE CLEAR THROUGHOUT ALL OUR DISCUSSIONS THAT THEY ARE EXPLORATORY ONLY.

3. FOOD ASSISTANCE, PATAN SAID JULY 18 WHEAT AND BARLEY HARVEST SO FAR, WHICH HAS BEEN COMPLETED FOR ABOUT 85 PERCENT OF PLANTED AREA, INDICATES DESPITE LOSSES GRAIN IMPORTS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION WILL NOT RPT NOT BE NECESSARY, ALTHOUGH ABILITY TO EXPORT WILL BE AFFECTED. HE SAID IN ANOTHER WEEK - TEN DAYS FINAL ASSESSMENT WILL BE MADE.

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4. OTHER GRANT ASSISTANCE. BOTH PATAN AND DEPMIN OF AGRICULTURE STANCIU WHOM WE SAW EARLIER ON THE 18TH AFFIRMED NEED FOR SEEDS FOR SECOND PLANTINGS. WE HAVE BEEN PROMISED DETAILED LIST OF VARIETIES, PLANTING DATES AND QUANTITIES EARLY WEEK OF JULY 21.

5. CCC CREDITS. WE TOLD PATAN THAT FEED GRAINS NOT LIKELY TO BE ON CCC LIST UNTIL MID-SEPTEMBER AND ALSO INFORMED HIM OF THOSE PRODUCTS CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE. ACCORDING TO PATAN, CORN PROSPECTS ARE STILL PROMISING DESPITE SOME FLOOD LOSSES. PROVIDED OF COURSE FAVORABLE WEATHER HOLDS FROM NOW ON, "EXCEPTIONAL" YIELDS ARE EXPECTED IN SOME AREAS. AS EXPECTED FINAL YIELDS CANNOT BE ACCURATELY ESTIMATE UNTIL SEPTEMBER, ALTHOUGH BETTER ESTIMATE OF LOSSES MAY BE AVAILABLE IN COMING WEEKS. WE WILL BE REPORTING SEPARATELY ON OUR OWN OBSERVATIONS. EARLIER STANCIU HAD TOLD US GOR HOPE WOULD BE TO HAVE IMPORTS OF 100,000 TONS OF FEED GRAINS BY END OF SEPTEMBER. PATAN SHOWED IMMEDIATE INTERPJ IN CCC CREDITS FOR COTTON, BUT HE DID NOT SPECIFY WHETHER NEEDS WOULD GO BEYOND DOLS 7.6 MILLION UNUSED PORTION OF CREDIT. HE ALSO EXPRESSED SOME INTEREST IN BEEF AND DAIRY BREEDING CATTLE. MORE PRECISE READING ON COTTON AS WELL AS OTHER ITMES MENTIONED PARA 4 REF A WAS PROMISED MID-WEEK.

6. THESE ITEMS ARE OF COURSE IN ADDITION TO ROMANIAN REQUEST FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE ADDRESSED TO UNDR0, FOR WHICH US CONTRIBUTION MAY BE APPROPRIATE (REF C). WE ALSO AWAIT GUIDANCE ON POSSIBLE AID IN GOR FLOOD-CONTROL PROGRAM (REF B).

7. TIMING. UNLESS DECISION ON TIMING NEEDS TO BE MADE QUICKLY, WE WOULD PREFER AWAIT MORE DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ROMANIAN NEEDS, MOST OF WHICH SHOULD BE IN OUR HANDS BY MID-WEEK.
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